Philosophy 3: Critical Thinking

MWF 9-950 BUCH 1940
Winter 2009

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Course Description

The capacity for reason is a distinctive human trait. Whether wrangling over how to interpret some scientific data or thinking through the implications of a considered action, the reasoning aspect of our existence is pervasive.   But we don't always reason well. Sometimes we are intellectually sloppy. Other times we are lured in and tricked by charlatans. It would be nice to know how about the general nature of how to reason, at least to avoid being duped in the world. To that end we will consider the basic concepts of argumentation, spend some time exposing fallacious reasoning patterns, and develop a simple system of natural deduction for modeling the logic of statements. If all goes well, you will have a basic grasp of the tools of logic and a sharper mind. If things flop, there will be weeping, gnashing of teeth, and loathing of all things formal.

Text

The Power of Logic 4th ed., by Howard-Snyder, Howard-Snyder, and Wasserman.
(Please note: the 1st-3rd editions of this text were written by a different author, Layman. If you are relying on an older version, make sure you do the homework out of the 4th edition.)

Website: http://www.philosophy.ucsb.edu/websites/phil3/

The slides, homework assignments, and final review can be accessed through the philosophy department website. Click on Courses and then on Downloadable Syllabi at the top. My general practice will be to post the slides the night before the relevant lecture. I reserve the right to not do so. You are encouraged to consult them as they become available.

Requirements

Participation	**5**%
Homework	**15**%
Midterm 1	**25**%
Midterm2	**25**%
Final	**30**%

The HW is credit / no-credit. No late homework will be accepted.

Tentative Schedule

Unit I

Week 1 Basic Concepts / Counterexamples	Chapter 1
Week 2 Counterexamples / Identifying Arguments	Chapter 2
Week 3 Logic and Language	Chapter 3

Unit I Midterm: Friday 1/23/09

Unit II

Week 4 Fallacies	Chapter 4
Week 5 Categorical Logic: Statements	Chapter 5
Week 6 Categorical Logic: Syllogisms, Venn Diagrams	Chapter 6

Unit II Midterm: Friday 2/13/09

Unit III

Final: Thursday 3/19/09 8-11am